

United States EPA 510-F-93-011
Environmental Protection Agency March 1993

Solid Waste And Emergency Response (OS-420WF)

EPA Streamlined Implementation

A New Way To Look At UST Corrective Actions

Some Background Information

Over the last two years about 1000 releases from underground storage tanks (USTs) have been reported every week, bringing the national total to over 180,000 in December 1992. In most of these cases, staff in state programs oversee cleanups performed by tank owners and their contractors. However, the work of overseeing so many cleanups is overwhelming state staff and administrative systems.

"Streamlining" their cleanup procedures and oversight systems is one way that states can meet the demands of increased numbers of reported releases. "Streamlining" means using total quality management techniques, improved technologies, and innovative regulatory approaches to make cleanups faster, cheaper, and more effective.

The Office Of Solid Waste And Emergency Response (OSWER) has published OSWER Directive 9650.13 entitled, "Streamlined Implementation of UST Corrective Action Requirements." The directive, which was released in late 1992, is an important part of EPA's strategy for helping states cope with the challenges posed by the growing numbers of release reports that they are receiving.

This directive is a policy statement intended to encourage states to streamline using the flexibility that EPA wrote into the federal technical requirements for UST corrective actions (40 CFR 280 subpart F). The directive also can be useful to states with regulations that differ significantly from the federal regulations.

Why Streamline?

Streamlining can benefit implementing agencies, tank owners and other interested parties, as well as the environment, by making cleanups faster, less expensive, and more effective. Streamlining can help state and local UST programs:

- Begin cleanups sooner, making them more effective in protecting the environment;
- Reduce delays in the cleanup process;
- Oversee more cleanups more effectively with the same level of resources; and
- Reduce unnecessary paperwork, thereby cutting the costs of plans and reports.

Why Did EPA Publish This Directive?

The Agency believes that the national UST program, which includes all "implementing Agencies" and EPA itself, must renew its commitment to innovation and improvement so that it can meet the challenges posed by the growing number of releases requiring corrective action. The directive meets several new objectives for EPA's streamlining work.

- It strongly affirms EPA's policy to support streamlining, particularly in state programs where most cleanups are managed.
- It clearly explains the flexibility in the federal regulations and should eliminate some perceived legal barriers to streamlining that don't really exist.
- It provides programs with some fresh ideas for streamlining that can help managers get support for making changes within their organizations.
- It should promote a more active dialogue between regulators and other interested parties on what improvements might be possible in individual states.

①

②

③

What It Does

This directive provides guidance and examples of how agencies (primarily state UST programs) have used and can use the flexibility in the federal regulations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their programs and make clean-ups faster, cheaper, and more effective.

Even though the directive is based on the federal regulations, many of the improvements described can be implemented by states that have regulations that differ significantly from those of EPA. Streamlining has benefits for all programs, including approved state programs. The directive:

- Explains what streamlining means and why it is an important part of EPA's policy.
- Identifies opportunities to carry out each section of the federal UST corrective action regulations in more flexible, efficient, and cost-effective ways.
- Presents numerous examples of improvements states can make and have made, including:
 - Combining or eliminating plans and reports that require review and approval,
 - Standardizing reporting formats,

- Foregoing traditional, site-specific corrective action plans for simple, low-risk sites in favor of providing clear guidance and monitoring results, and
- Using field measurement techniques instead of more costly laboratory methods that tend to cause delays.

For More Information

For additional information or a copy of the OSWER Directive 9650.13, contact EPA's RCRA/Superfund Hotline, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. EST. The national toll-free number is 800 424-9346; for the hearing impaired, the number is TDD 800 553-7672.